

Dear Fellow Flight Attendants,

I am writing to you to raise your awareness of Human Trafficking.

Sadly, every year thousands of young women and children are taken, kidnapped, or coerced into a world of exploitation and torture. They enter various destination cities in the U.S. and around the world by trains, cars, and planes. Each year an estimated 18,000 innocent victims enter the U.S. and over 300,000 children are trafficked within our own borders.

Child Sex Tourism is on the rise in spite of the efforts of the U.S. Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and efforts of the global community. The fact is, this is a big business and children are the commodity. This is a \$32 billion industry second only to drug trafficking.

In my 37 years of flying, I have encountered situations that did not seem right. These are just a few examples. An 18-year-old boy traveling domestically with a two day old baby. No diaper bag, no clothes, one bottle, and two diapers in his pocket. He says he is taking the baby to see his mother. His girlfriend could not make the trip. I called the police on landing but he was long gone by the time they got there.

In a departure lounge, a man and woman had a 3-year-old girl between them crying for her mother. The man turns to the woman and tells her to make the child shut up. I called the police.

On our Moscow trip we have young girls excited to be coming to the U.S. because they are going to be models and work on TV. Through the interpreter they tell us after landing in Chicago, they have to take a bus to NYC. The truth is the girls are not going to be models; they are to be forced into the sex trade.

This is modern day slavery. We as Flight Attendants are in a position to help these girls and others before they become victims.

Most of you have similar stories, but did not know what you were seeing. I have been doing volunteer work for a 501(c)(3), non-profit group called Innocents At Risk established in 2005. They have a public-private partnership with the U.S. Department of State and a vast number of government and non-government agencies to raise awareness of Human Trafficking. Together we believe that Flight Attendants can be a first-line defense against this modern day slavery.

A national hotline number has been established. 1-888-373-7888. I urge you to carry this number in your wallet. If you suspect a situation that does not seem right, this number is a tool you can use to report situations that do not look normal. You do not have to give your name. You can help build an information base by reporting what you see and by calling 1-888-373-7888.

Our travel industry can play a major role in identifying and preventing the most challenging human rights abuse of the 21st century. For more information about Innocents At Risk and how you can help, please contact Deborah S. Sigmund, Founder, dsigmund@eoc.net.

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In addition, I would be happy to answer any questions. (Email: communications@apfa.org and your request will be forwarded - *Editor*) Together we can stop this human tragedy.

Sandra Fiorini, IOR